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ABSTRACT

Representatives of the socialist countries of the Asia-Pacific region, namely, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, met to discuss research studies about perspectives on the future in these countries. (Representatives of the People's Republic of China and of the USSR were also present.) The seminar's goals were: (1) to review the interim drafts of the country studies presented, so that the authors of the studies could revise them in the light of discussion; (2) to deliberate on how socialist countries perceive the future; (3) to identify in terms of past development experience and foreseeable trends an agenda for work in UNESCO's fields of competence--education, culture, science and technology, and communication; and (4) to explore possibilities for promoting networking of individuals and institutions engaged in future-oriented studies. The seminar proceedings include an appendix listing those who participated. (DB)

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SECOND SEMINAR

under Major Programme I
Reflection on World Problems
and Future-Oriented Studies

11 - 14 April 1989
Bangkok, Thailand

REPORT

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ONE

INTRODUCTION

As part of its Major Programme I : "Reflections on World Problems and Future-Oriented Studies", UNESCO had initiated in 1986 a project on "Perspectives on Asia's Futures" to be carried out by the Bureau of Studies and Programming (BEP), Paris, jointly with the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP), Bangkok. In the first stage of this project, three sets of studies were commissioned: survey of literature on future, review of development strategies in selected countries of Asia, and regional scenarios of future in regard to education, science and technology, environment, communication, economy, youth, and women.

These studies were discussed in a Regional Research Seminar held in July 1987 at the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP), which (i) reviewed the studies commissioned (on assessment of the national development strategies, and on analysis of literature on the region's future); and (ii) discussed the emerging trends in scenarios of future in the Asia-Pacific region. Later, these studies were finalized and published as documents by BEP, now renamed as Office for Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation (PBE).

As a second step, during the current biennium (1987-89), additional studies were commissioned, covering the socialist countries of the region, namely, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolian People's Republic, and Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Having gone through non-capitalist path of development, these countries present a different set of experience; its documentation, thus, complements the work of the earlier exercise.

This Second Regional Seminar, titled "Perspectives on Asia's Futures", was organized by PBE and RUSHSAP at the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok, from 11 through 14 April 1989, to bring together the authors of these studies for a discussion and to draw elements of commonality as well as differences as regards future perspectives. The Seminar aimed at (i) reviewing the interim drafts of the country studies presented, so that the authors of these studies could revise them in the light of discussion; (ii) deliberating on how socialist countries perceive the future, and what are the different scenarios; (iii) identifying in terms of past development experience and foreseeable trends an agenda for work in UNESCO's fields of competence, viz. education, culture, science and technology, communication; and finally, (iv) exploring possibilities for promoting networking of individuals and institutions engaged in future-oriented studies.

The Seminar was attended by representatives of the People's Republic of China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (2), the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Mongolian People's Republic (2), USSR (2), and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (2). In addition, there were observers from ESCAP, FAO, ILO, and UNICEF. The meeting was assisted by two consultants.

The Seminar commenced in the afternoon of 11 April 1989 at the UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP). Dr Yogesh Atal, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences, opened the meeting with a word of welcome and a brief explanation regarding the purpose and scope of the seminar. In his Introductory Remarks, Dr E. Roussakov, Senior Research Officer, Bureau of Programme Planning, Office for Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation (PBE/BP), presented the objectives and the activities of Major Programme I on future-oriented studies, aimed at highlighting the emerging trends and changes that might occur in UNESCO's fields of competence on the threshold of the 21st Century.

He said that the future-oriented activities of UNESCO are carried out along four major lines : (i) the collection of information on the state of future research; (ii) original studies; (iii) analysis of foreseeable trends and developments in UNESCO's fields of competence at the regional, subregional and national levels; and (iv) identification of foreseeable global trends in education, science, culture, and communication. The Organization has also promoted the introduction of courses on world problems and future-oriented studies in university and post-graduate curricula. Concluding his remarks, he expressed the hope that this seminar would further contribute to the strengthening of Major Programme I, which in the next Medium Term Plan is selected as one of the Transverse Programmes. He invited the participants to critically review each country study and suggest ways to improve them so that authors are helped in the revision of these studies.

The Seminar was inaugurated by Dr Makaminan Makagiansar, Assistant Director-General/Personal Representative of the Director-General for Asia and the Pacific and Director PROAP. Dr Makagiansar underlined the key importance of the intellectual endeavour of future-oriented studies and, therefore, of this Seminar. He emphasised the point that it was imperative to monitor the changes that are constantly taking place in the present-day world and to anticipate the future shape of things, in order to prepare ourselves to enter the next century. This is a responsibility, he said, that we owe to our children and grandchildren.

Underscoring the need to work towards elimination of poverty and of illiteracy, Dr Makagiansar invited the participants to view the educational system in a larger perspective, and underlined the need for rediscovering the rich cultural and intellectual heritage of the countries of the region, in terms of human creativity and potential.

The value of the future-oriented studies, he said, lies in that these could prepare the youth and the coming generation to cope with the problems, notably as regards some important domains such as impact of bio-technologies, new breakthroughs in research, emerging food systems and consumer patterns, environmental questions, educational systems. There was need to institutionalise such studies through networking so that these could serve as beacons, as warning lights, and assist societies in their search for peace and development in a holistic perspective. Future-oriented studies could also enable family of nations to better tackle the dismal reality of disparity and of inequity among, and within, nations in our growingly interdependent world.

After the Inaugural Session, the seminar decided the following as chairpersons of different sessions:

Session : 1 *General Orientation:*
Chairperson : Professor Luo Zhao Hong (People's Republic of China)

Session : 2 *Presentation of Country Papers: Viet Nam, Laos, USSR*
Chairperson : Mr Chae Ryang Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Session : 3 *Presentation of Country Papers: DPR of Korea, Mongolia, USSR*
Chairperson : Professor Nguyen Hong Phong (Socialist Republic of Viet Nam)

Session : 4 *Presentation of Country Papers: China; and General Discussion*
Chairperson : Dr Dorligiin Damdin (Mongolian People's Republic)

Session : 5 *Closing Session*
Chairperson : Mr Khamphao Phonekeo (Lao People's Democratic Republic)

The first session began with a brief intervention by Dr E. Roussakov who alluded to certain difficulties in executing the project .

He mentioned that the focus of these studies has to be on the critical analysis of the development policies. In the context of restructuration process, the papers were expected to highlight as to how education, science, culture, communication, etc. are developing and what are country specific problems? One gain of these studies was seen in terms of their contribution to UNESCO's Third Medium Term Programme planning. He hinted at some of the inadequacies of the papers and urged the authors to revise the papers following the guidelines provided by the secretariat and in the light of the discussions at this seminar.

Dr Yogesh Atal, Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences (UNESCO/PROAP, Bangkok) explained the purpose of the Seminar, in particular the need to have inputs from socialist countries in the Asian region concerning their perceptions and "Perspectives on Asia's Futures". The Asian project on Future being executed by RUSHSAP is part of UNESCO's worldwide programme to promote studies on future scenarios. The studies being discussed at this seminar are part of this project.

He said that UNESCO's interest in future is threefold. First, it wishes to inform its programme and activities by the perception of the future. In other words, the Programme is designed to assist in the preparation of UNESCO's Third Medium Term Plan. From this point of view, there is a need to monitor changes, review past performance, and prospect for the future -- both a possible future and a desirable future -- at the global and national levels. Second, being an intellectual arm of the United Nations System, UNESCO has the responsibility to systematize and synthesize the available literature on future. This implies inventorization of various methodologies and conceptual frameworks, identification of fields and areas covered for future projections, classification of scenarios of future, and delineation of gaps in knowledge with a view to preparing a priority list for further work. Third, UNESCO has the task of promoting "Future Studies" or "Futurology" as an intellectual speciality within the academia.

Initially, the Asian project focused on the first two areas mentioned above. The Project was developed primarily upon the assumption that there is a difference between how the region looks at the world and the way problems are defined globally. He said there is as much a need to see the world in the Asian context as there is the need to see Asia in the world context. Taking the same logic further, country contexts should also be viewed from both the angles.

Following this assumption, three different exercises were attempted in the first phase of the Asian Project:

I. to review past development experiences in selected number of countries

II. to compile comprehensive annotated bibliographies about "Future" studies as well as to attempt content analysis of their findings to portray the country profiles of studies on future.

III. to compile regional scenarios by investigating existing literature in such fields as women, youth, science and technology, environment, communication, education, and economy.

The authors of the studies under these projects came together in July 1987, in Bangkok, to exchange their findings. Some of the highlights of that exercise were recounted by Dr Atal, as under:

i) All countries agreed that there should be development but they differed on the definition of "development" and the path of "development". The non-socialist countries generally followed the western paradigm of development which was largely imitative, and which heavily emphasized borrowing and transfers -- of institutions, technology, and even manpower. On reflection, they all felt dissatisfied with the gains of that process which did not generate self-reliance. They rejected GNP as the sole indicator of development as it was economic, ignoring the crucial social factors. It was hinted that a single model of development did not succeed in homogenizing Asia; it fostered heterogeneity, diversity, and variety. With more development, countries began to reassert their cultural identity.

ii) A consensus among Asian scholars seems emerging that Asian countries should not imitate the model of the developed society, but it still remains unclear as to what direction was required to move towards "endogenous development". Paradoxically, the participants emphasized that the international dimension of development cannot be ignored; in the present day world, no society can completely insulate itself.

iii) Several correction courses are taken by the countries in their bid to make the paradigm shift; these include "reform by the book" -- adhering to ideologies; dichotomising between various polar types such as "rural versus urban"; piecemeal borrowing from various successful experiences; and clinical treatment as remedies for wrongs.

Dr Atal proposed a four fold classification for the different scenarios on the "Future" that are available in the literature:

a) "*The Inevitable Future*", i.e. the fact that certain elements are irrevocable and that certain things are bound to occur. These may include growing urbanization, industrialization, environmental exploitation, information revolution, the impact of science, and growth of fundamentalism;

b) "*Possible Scenarios*" which may, or may not, happen. These can further be classified into pessimistic and optimistic.

c) "*Imponderables*" implying the unpredictability of certain situations -- natural or man-made.

d) "*Desirables*" which are based upon mainly ideological predispositions.

The studies undertaken may illustrate all these typologies and invoke such basic issues as pluralism and comparative analysis. It seems, however, that particularly in some socialist countries, the major preoccupation is with the present and with the desire to undo the consequences of the past rather than planning for the future. Dr Atal hoped that the papers related to socialist countries would provide comparable data to strengthen the generalizations that emerged through the first phase exercise.

With a brief discussion on the presentations by Dr Roussakov and Dr Atal, and on the agenda, the session was adjourned.

TWO

COUNTRY PAPERS :

Presentation and Discussion

VIETNAM : *Chu Khac Thuat and Nguyen Hong Phong*

Summary of Paper

The revised strategy of reconstruction of Vietnam is characterised by the development of a multisectoral market economy. The private sector is now allowed to develop parallelly with the public sector, although the latter must remain dominant. New management practices are being introduced to remove the undesirable effects of bureaucratic centralism. To exploit both human and natural resources, Vietnam wishes to develop industry, alongside of agriculture.

Science and technology are assigned a key position in the process of reconstruction of the country. They are regarded as both a tool for establishing a model of development and an indicator of it. Vietnam wishes to acquire the latest scientific and technical knowledge, and adapt it to the national context. This requires a policy of efficient investment and of manpower development -- where education and training are adapted to the needs of the economy.

Vietnam pursues the policy of " education for all ". It expects to achieve, by the year 2000, universalization of education of the first and second degree. The educational reforms include improvement of curricula and retraining or continuing education. In the content of training, human sciences and civil instruction feature prominently.

For modernization of the nation, Vietnam draws on those aspects of its tradition which are not contrary to a modern social ethic. The renovation of its cultural heritage can be seen in the preservation and restoration of old architectural works, development of museums, and translation of ancient literature into modern Vietnamese.

Discussion

There is great interest internationally concerning the recent changes in Vietnam, particularly since the 6th Party Congress. Vietnam is currently concentrating its efforts to meet the exigencies of the present and to rectify the consequences of the past. Although there is a felt need to plan for the year 2000, such development strategy is still in the process of elaboration.

There is evidently a wind of change in Vietnam, such as the greater willingness to restructure at the national level. This is particularly the case concerning the innovative role of the private sector as a complement to the existing role of the State and cooperatives in running the economy of the country. Vietnam is now paying attention to the need to raise the material and spiritual living standards of its population; there is an emphasis on production of food and consumer goods. Goods for export are also being produced. Issues such as the relationship between tradition and modernism, the linkage between the national and the international dimensions, the satisfaction of basic needs such as health care and education, and the promotion of a new socio-cultural environment are coming to the fore for a closer scrutiny. At the heart of current calls for reform in Vietnam are the questions of industrialization, investment promotion, utilization of natural resources, development of science and technology, and human resource development.

Six trends may be identified as shaping Vietnam's future.

(i) The inclusion of the private sector in the economy. This has extensive implications for manpower planning, institution building, and manufacturing of appropriate equipment. It is related with the demand for more consumer goods.

(ii) The country is opening up to the outer world, in particular in the economic field. This suggests more export orientation for the future. It implies the need for more investment, banking and credit, all of which will be linked with the participation of domestic and foreign individuals and organizations in the country's development process.

(iii) There is a national desire to preserve some traditions while adding new values.

(iv) There is the question of a population policy, with a view to reducing population. The population problem is compounded by lack of cultivable land, and inadequacies of social welfare programmes in satisfying the needs of families.

(v) There is the prospect of greater urbanization which will lead to greater migration from rural areas and to concomitant pressure on urban amenities.

(vi) The issue of greater people's participation is likely to emerge in relation to development planning and the role of individuals and groups in shaping the destiny of the country.

In the new development strategy, attention will have to be paid to the following : (i) existence of an extensive bureaucracy which lacks managerial capacity and efficiency in several domains; (ii) inadequacies of investment laws and regulations to attract foreign investment; (iii) the need for greater efficiency in agriculture, and introduction of biotechnology; (iv) utilization and consolidation of existing scientific and technical institutions and personnel to promote research and development of science and technology, and (v) promotion of industrialization.

A need is, thus, indicated for changes in conceptualization in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the development process.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC : *Khampao Phonekeo*

Summary of Paper

Since the Unification of the two regions, and the founding of the People's Democratic Republic in 1975, Laos has established a new policy of social reform.

Laos considers development as a process of socio-cultural transformations. Development is expected to lead to conditions of individual well-being to meet economic needs and to promote cultural development. In Laotian strategy of development, Buddhism is assigned an important role, particularly in the spread of literacy and attending to people's health through traditional medicine.

National education aims at the development of productive forces, without losing sight of indigenous development. Since the reforms of 1962, an attempt has been made to adapt the system to local needs. It is important that Laos adopts a new strategy for national education till the year 2000.

Discussion

The Laotian concept of development may be said to be based upon the quest for a "middle path". This is influenced by the fact that it is primarily a Buddhist country and the fact that the socialist system coexists peacefully with Buddhist traditions and practices. The part played by religion as a cultural phenomenon in propelling the conceptualization of the development process provides an interesting example of the interaction between culture and national development.

Planning for the future is evident in five national programmes adopted in 1986. These relate to : communication infrastructure, environmental protection, technology, educational reform, and food production. UNESCO has assisted the country in developing its science and technology, in particular rural technology. The planning process is influenced by the Party Congress, which has established strategies for the future.

There is currently greater emphasis on the international market, in view of the liberalization of national economic policy. This has initiated a search for foreign technology, and created a willingness to promote foreign investment. The government feels the need to respond to national and international trade as a means of developing the country. The State has a relaxed attitude towards Buddhism and has a policy to use Buddhist monks to research traditional medicine, and to spread literacy in rural areas.

Laos has a high literacy rate and slow population growth. In fact, there is a policy to encourage large families. However, there are some glaring weaknesses, particularly in relation to basic needs such as health care (e.g. high infant mortality rate). There is also a question concerning how to render agricultural life more productive and how to set the pace for efficient industrialization with minimum negative impact on a society which has retained much of its cultural heritage. Likewise, the tide of change may call for greater participation of people and pluralism in the system.

The challenge for the future is conditioned by the ability to retain the old, adapt it to the present, and respond to the future. The planning process should examine with care the pros and cons of transforming a parochial economy into an internationalized economy as it will have great impact on the existing socially cohesive community.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) : *A. Beltchouk*

Summary of Presentation

In the absence of a written paper, a verbal presentation was made by the Soviet participant. He prefaced his statement by the remark that USSR is now gradually paying more attention to the countries of the Pacific Rim. This is because the country foresees a more dynamic prospect for this region in the coming two decades and that USSR wishes to participate in that process.

The developing strategies of USSR are now being restructured to accommodate this new orientation. This implies a more active participation, in the coming years, of the Far Eastern part of USSR in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Far Eastern region is currently less developed than other regions of the country though it has vast untapped natural resources like oil, tin, fish, and timber. Efforts are being made to accelerate the growth of the economy. It may lead to changes in the patterns of imports and exports. Moreover, it would require changes in population and social policy. The region is presently very sparsely populated with only seven million people and has a distorted sex ratio. If the region develops, it would require immigration of labour force from other regions of the country and probably the use of labour from neighbouring countries. The region has a potential for tourism development which may attract substantial transient population from abroad; already the number of Japanese tourists is rising.

At present, this region is like a transitional society characterised by instability of various kinds: community ties are comparatively loose, divorce and delinquency rates are high, socialization of children is poor, and education is not properly related to the local context. All these elements of social development will have to be taken into account in any future strategy of development of this region.

In regional development planning social policy in general will have a pivotal role to play focussing on: intensive residential construction, such as construction of schools, kindergartens, cinemas, etc.; introduction of attractive salaries / wages. An adequate infrastructure will have to be built and people's living standard will have to be raised.

Discussion

A prominent feature of recent Soviet policy is the shift of attention to the Pacific region, based upon the forecast that the Pacific Rim will be the most dynamic region for the next decades. This reorientation is conditioned by the changing structure of Soviet society and a more liberal polity. It underlines the fact that the Soviet Far East is a region of vast, unexplored resources, sparsely populated, and geographically close to some of the most dynamic countries in the Asian region. There is both an internal and an international dimension to the greater interest in the Soviet Far East : to use it to bolster the internal economy of the country and to capitalize upon it as the economic gateway to international trade and export-oriented industrialization.

There is long-term Soviet planning with forecast in such areas as international environment. It acknowledges the fact that the Soviet Far East should develop more quickly than other parts of the country, and that it should promote imports and exports. The latter is particularly shaped by the availability of massive raw materials which can be exported to other countries.

Implementation of this plan is not without difficulties. The demographic pattern of the Soviet Far East is disquieting due to the fact that it is sparsely populated and that the migration rate is high, resulting in an unstable social situation. The basic infrastructure is still underdeveloped. There is an imbalance of the sexes -- more men than women, and the community ties are loose, implying high divorce and delinquency rates. Imported labour, such as engineers from other parts of the Soviet Union, faces the additional difficulty of adapting to local conditions, partly because of differences in education and training, and partly because of harsh climatic conditions. There may also be a disjuncture between regional planning and overall national planning.

These difficulties are being grappled with at the national level. There is, thus, planning for improving the social infrastructure of the Soviet Far East. Incentives and regulations to encourage foreign investment and even the use of foreign labour are pending while there is realization of the need for more social development, in particular social welfare, so as to encourage people to live in the region. There is a call for more decentralization and devolution of power both at the national level and the local level. The liberalization of thought and processes implies the opening up of the country not only to ideas, but free movement of goods and people, and diversification of market.

THE MONGOLIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC : *Dorligiin Damdin*

Summary of Paper

The challenge facing the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR) is conditioned, to a great extent, by the need to develop an agro-industrial society, based primarily upon animal husbandry and light and mining industries, into a more industrialized one. Future prospects are influenced by governmental planning, exemplified by the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the MPR up to the year 2005 and the General Scheme of Development and Distribution of the Productive Forces of the MPR up to the year 2000.

In the educational field, the MPR has eradicated illiteracy about 30 years ago, but certain problems still need to be attended to. These include the quality of education and the low level of supply of educational materials and structural weaknesses, particularly at the secondary, vocational and higher levels of education. Solutions should include measures to improve secondary education, especially its vocational dimension, and polytechnical education with emphasis on more computerization and technological know-how. They should be enhanced by the training of personnel in the scientific and technological spectra, and the linkage between education and productive activities, to respond to the growing needs of the national economy. The measures already proposed by governmental planning comprise, *inter alia*, (1) expansion of pre-school institutions, (2) reduction of the gap in general educational and vocational training between rural and urban areas, (3) encouragement of polytechnical education at secondary schools, (4) teaching of informatics and computer technology, and (5) development of public education.

In the scientific and technological fields, major problems include the insufficiency of research and development and lack of technology to propel national development, particularly in relation to the information and communication infrastructure. Investment in industrialization is contingent upon accelerated progress in science and technology, including managerial technology. It requires more personnel proficient in science and technology, integration of higher education with production, perfection of an information network, and collaboration with other countries and international organizations.

Complementary to technological advancement, the cultural heritage of the country needs to be preserved and adapted to modern times. Current governmental programmes include, *inter alia*, development of aesthetic education for the people, restoration of cultural monuments, and intellectual stimulus. In future, more concrete measures will be taken to acquire appropriate technical equipment, to improve data base and information analysis, and to further develop information infrastructure within the country. These may comprise, for example, more data banks, a developed information-communication system, effective networking for documentary and other information, and extensive training of related personnel. A more advanced communication system, particularly television, telephones and digital transmission, is imperative for national development. Also important is the need for increased cooperation with UNESCO and assistance from UNESCO to implement measures envisaged in the future-oriented development programmes of the country in the fields of science, technology, culture, and education.

Discussion

The socio-economic development of the MPR is influenced greatly by the existence of long-term planning, in particular the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the MPR up to the Year 2005 and the General Scheme of Development and Distribution of the Productive Forces of the MPR up to the year 2000. Although there is much emphasis on development of natural resources, science and technology, the human factor is not neglected, and there is a call for more education and training, especially in relation to technical knowledge. There is also greater democratization of the socio-economic system with the prospect of more restructuring for the future.

The social dimension of the country is indicative of the path to development. Currently, there is a high literacy rate, but there are inadequacies in the quality of secondary and higher levels of education and polytechnical education.

Issues requiring further attention in the future may include the following. First, although there is long term national development planning, there is need for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process. Second, although there is devolution of power to grassroots organizations, such as enterprises and cooperatives, the involvement of these groups in decision-making at all levels needs to be reinforced. Third, there are problems of inaccessibility of parts of the educational system, partly due to the vast terrain to be covered and the dispersed pattern of the population.

Mongolian society is now more interested in developing international ties and wishes to interact more with other countries and international organizations, particularly those belonging to the Asia-Pacific region.

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA : *Chae Ryang Il*

Summary of Paper

In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), illiteracy was completely eradicated in 1949. Since then the country has made strenuous efforts to enforce universal compulsory education. This has led to gradual, constant improvements, resulting in universal 11-year compulsory education, which was successfully enforced during the period 1972-1975.

The prospect of educational development in the DPRK is much influenced by the reality of socio-economic construction, universal development of science and culture, educational work and educational trends world wide.

The key tasks of educational development in the DPRK consist of improving decisively the quality of education and actively promoting intellectualization of the whole society. The quality of education can be enhanced by carrying out a policy aimed at improving (i) the content and methods of education; (ii) the qualification and role of teachers; (iii) the technical foundations of schools.

The intellectualization of the whole society can be attained through compulsory higher education and improvement of social education.

Discussion

Responding to the questions raised by the participants the speaker elaborated further the following points.

i. In a mission-oriented approach within the framework of *Juche* philosophy, the DPRK has successfully eliminated illiteracy by a) definite, time-bound programme supported by deep political commitment; b) mobilising all resources; and c) by enlisting public participation in implementing the literacy programme. These achievements provide an experience of high pertinence to developing countries, particularly in Asia and the Pacific, as regards the current regional programme of Education for all in Asia and the Pacific (APPEAL).

ii. The thrust of present policies in the DPRK clearly indicates need for international cooperation (with both the socialist and non-socialist countries) as regards higher education, including technical education, and need for training by exchange of skills. External cooperation is likely to increase.

iii. The concept of "intellectualization" of the whole society means that all members receive higher education in their respective areas of specialization so that they develop as total human beings with a cultural and technical level comparable to that of university and college graduates. To realize this goal, the country has a policy of making higher education compulsory and strengthening social education especially by providing to all people wider access to a system of study-while-working.

iv. DPRK policies are premised on the fact that education does have great influence on the development process.

v. The Grand People's Study House plays a prominent role in the currently evolving educational system, especially as it combines the advantages accruing from the Open University System, and the system of distant education. DPRK is promoting the use of modern information technologies in its educational system, which seems pertinent in regional and international context.

vi. In DPRK, demand for improving the quality of higher education in modern science and technology is increasing, and the country is responding to it.

vii. The country paper by DPRK was confined only to education and, as such, does not provide any information as regards UNESCO's other fields of competence. The author of the paper appreciated the need to enlarge the paper so as to cover science, technology, culture, and communication.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA : *Luo Zhao Hong*

Summary of Paper

Specificities of the Chinese situation have guided China's long term development strategy of socialist reconstruction. Its vast population and a weak economic foundation were the two key considerations that shaped China's development strategy. Its current focus is on Four Modernizations : modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defence. As such, China has now adopted an open door policy.

The present policy of economic construction is directed to attain the goal of quadrupling the gross annual production in the industrial and agricultural sectors by the year 2000 and bridge the gap between China and the industrialized countries. The aim of this growth is to have better "economic results", to improve the material and cultural life of the people, and to ensure harmonious development of all the sectors of the national economy while leap frogging in. China hopes to control its population at 1.5 billion level by the year 2000, when the national income is expected to rise from 368.8 billion Yuan in 1980 to 1434.2 billion Yuan (US$800 - 1000). It plans to reach its industrial output value to the 1980 level of the United States.

Beginning in 1981, the Sixth Five-Year-Plan of the new economic policy was devoted to readjustment, reform, consolidation and acceleration of the pace of economic reform through monitoring growth rate, reducing the size of capital construction, and removing administrative bottlenecks. During the current Seventh Five Year Plan, international technology transfer transactions, indigenous technology generation, and productivity of enterprises are growing, alongwith the rapid expansion of technology markets. From 1991 onwards, the growth rate is expected to be around 8 per cent. During this period, China has to face the following problems: (i) employment for the additional 250 million people, (ii) creation of more facilities for education, and for advancement in science and technology, including high technology, (iii) increasing potential for agricultural production, (iv) energy shortage, and inadequate means of transport and communication, and (v) shortage of funds. To attain the target, and overcome the problems, China has taken several policy measures : these are, (i) thorough reform of the entire economic structure and of management practices, (ii) opening to the outside world, (iii) control of population growth and creation of employment, (iv) acceleration of agricultural development, (v) technological transformation of industries, and (vi) development of energy resources, and of transport and

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communication, (vii) high inflation rate. In this endeavour, China acknowledges the role of education, science and technology, and the need to develop cultural life and promote international understanding and peace.

Discussion

i. The country paper on China is well documented, and presents an appreciable intermediate exercise. However, the treatment given to economic-industrial aspects of development is too long compared to the discussion on educational and cultural aspects. Chinese prospective planning based on the country's Open Door Policy has taken note of the need to have a perception of world economy and the growing phenomenon of internationalization. It is also based on the premise of a multipolar world, in which Asia constitutes a pole of growing importance.

ii. Recent Chinese experience in attracting foreign capital and technology has even interested the USSR in its prospective planning, but certain problems, such as growing inflation, needed to be analysed in implementing such planning.

iii. The Chinese paper manifests the necessity of rethinking socialism and capitalism. Experience suggests that socio-economic development can not be guided by ideology alone. But productivity and growth require market economy.

iv. The question of the Chinese approach to population control was raised during the discussion, as the population is expected to reach over 1.5 billion by the year 2000, and could be a matter of major national concern.

v. It was suggested that in China, as in case of other countries, the question of minority population needs to be examined carefully.

THREE

COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The general discussion was assisted by Dr A. Sasson (Director, PBE/BP), Dr E. Roussakov, and Dr Yogesh Atal. Commonalities and problems relating to the country presentations were analyzed with a view to enriching the quality of the papers presented and to provide inputs for UNESCO's own programme concerning future-oriented studies.

COMMONALITIES

The following features emerged as commonalities in the region in question.

1) Reappraisal of "Development"

Although the countries covered by the research vary greatly in many respects, there is a general mood to rethink about the concept of development and the development planning process. The call for reform has emerged as a common feature of all the systems treated, based upon the seminal realization that ideology alone does not determine the path of development, although it remains an intrinsic feature of development strategies in the socialist countries.

There is general recognition that the internal dynamics of development is shaped by the external dynamics of development -- the international, global context. This explains the open-door policy being adopted by the governments of these countries. There is an acknowledgement of the internationalization of the economic order. The earlier concept of parallel markets -- one for capitalist countries, the other for socialist countries-- is thus impugned, and in its place, there is acceptance of the interdependence between all countries.

Future development in the area seems to be guided by the recognition of the fact that the Asia-Pacific region is gradually assuming special significance and, in the years to come, will become more important both in economic and demographic terms. The emergence of regional organizations to accelerate socio-economic development has reinforced this orientation.

It seems that in many of the countries covered, there is greater preoccupation about the present than about the future in the sense that development planning responds to remedying the repercussions of the past rather than addressing itself to long-term, prospective planning. However, the future is, to some extent, present in the development process due to the fact that the strategies of these countries are based upon a socialist ideology and posit it as a desirable determinant of future progress. Thus, the image of the future can be seen in the development efforts of the present.

2) Plurality of Scenarios

The cultural peculiarities of the individual countries have influenced the development strategies. As a result, while socialism remains a commonly accepted goal, the future configurations of each society are going to be different and distinct. These societies, like all other societies, will not look-alike. Their cultural identities will remain.

As countries are proceeding on a development path following a common ideology, they are making intermittent adjustments -- shifting emphases and introducing new elements as well as rethinking definitions. Thus, each society will have a distinct scenario of the future and the region will be characterized by a plurality of futures.

Plurality also implies coexistence of a multitude of group interests. This is evident in the greater willingness of the governments to encourage participation of the private sector into the development process. At another level, plurality permits accomodation of interests of different ethnic groups and individuals in various milieux requiring participation of different entities and sharing of resources and power. Minorities, indigenous groups, nomadic peoples are but some of the categories to which the State will have to cater with a view to ensuring their *modus vivendi* and survival.

These elements depend much upon democratisation of decision-making, balanced resource allocation, and a committed compromise for the sake of a common destiny.

3) Socio-Economic Equilibrium

One of the recurrent complaints lodged against the development process as fashioned by State planning agencies is that it places too much emphasis on the economic aspects of growth, exemplified by the widespread trend of promoting the GNP. All too often, this has neglected the social dimension which is the essence of people's development and which is instrumental in satisfying people's basic needs.

There is currently a reassessment of this approach, and the call for equilibrium between social factors and economic growth is gaining ground in the region. The former concern, in particular, a more realistic strategy responding to the demands of groups and individuals. It calls into play not only material welfare but also spiritual welfare. It questions the past tendency of State dominance in planning development for its people, while promoting a broader base for groups and individuals as constituents of the decision-making process.

Particularly worrying in several societies is the passive stance adopted towards social development, bureaucratic obstacles, and neglect of the human dimension. The situation is aggravated by rising inflation, unemployment, regional and income disparities, demographic pressures and environmental degradation, all of which may cause social dislocation.

If the development process is to stem the tide of discontent, it should accord greater attention to the social aspect of development.

4) Priority to Education, Science and Technology

A common feature concerning the educational level of the countries covered is the high literacy rate and a strong national emphasis on higher education and technical education. The move towards reinforcing secondary education and general education for the public, including distance education, is ostensible.

There is also a trend to pay greater attention to the dimension of science and technology. This comprises (i) the need to train scientific and technical manpower to handle modern technology; (ii) the creation and consolidation of scientific and technical institutions; (iii) the utilization of technology for multifarious purposes; (iv) the extension of technology (e.g. biotechnology, robotics, computerization) and its role in the exploitation and/or protection of natural resources and the environment; (v) the application of technology to the production process to satisfy the surge of consumption at home and commodity production for exports.

The priorities in these fields should be clearly established and disseminated internally and externally. This is imperative, as a clear enunciation of needs in this respect may help to tap resources and facilitate technology transfer from other countries and organizations.

A feature common to several of the countries covered is the call for investment promotion and the move towards industrialization. This entails both internal investment from local investors and the government itself, and external investment. Therefore, there is now an increase of laws and regulations to facilitate investment promotion, particularly to attract foreign capital.

This should not obscure the fact that the bureaucratic hurdles in many societies are pervasive, which may serve as a disincentive for investment.

On another front, one should not neglect the need for investment in not only large-scale industries but also in small-scale industries.

Adequate manpower strategies are also called for.

5) The Cultural Dimension

A common emphasis in the countries covered is the presentation and promotion of culture. This concerns retaining parts of the past while adapting traditions to modern conditions.

The role of religion in the context of a socialist state also needs to be investigated. Several countries have a common feature of a predominant Buddhist tradition. The manner in which it coexists with a socialist state offers a good ground for comparison. The relevance of science and technology in the preservation of historic monuments and other traditions is yet another area for research and reflection. This is instrumental in enhancing the national identity which may determine the specificity of national development.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNESCO PROJECT

The interim reports presented and the discussion on the general trends of development and the conceptions of future are significant as a backdrop for more specific considerations related to the spheres falling within the competence of UNESCO. The point was further reiterated that one of the purposes of this exercise is to draw meaningful lessons to inform UNESCO's own planning and programming. These studies were expected to make an input to UNESCO's Third Medium Term Plan which was on the anvil when these studies were commissioned. While the Plan has already been formulated, these studies will still help the Organization in the preparation of biennial programmes. Of course, the importance of these studies as contribution to the growing literature on future is fully recognized. There is very little available about these countries and publication of these studies will certainly fill major information gaps. The information presented in the reports will also be useful to national and other agencies involved in planning national development.

However, the studies in the present form need considerable improvement and rewriting to become publishable. There is unevenness in presentation and emphases, and they lack in comparability. These studies, it was pointed out, have laid heavier emphasis on the processes and problems of economic development and only marginally touched the social sector which is the prime concern of UNESCO and which was the main reason for commissioning these studies. Thus, while revising these studies, the authors will have to pay relatively more attention to social aspects of development and be specific about the trends and attendant problems that will require priority attention in the fields of education (literacy, school education, higher education, technical and vocational education), social and natural sciences, technology, culture, and communication.

In view of the shortcomings in the draft texts, the seminar participants agreed to devise a common outline for all the country papers. This outline -- details of which will be later worked out by the consultants in agreement with UNESCO secretariat (PBE and RUSHSAP)-- is reproduced below:

CHAPTER SCHEME

I. Introduction
- country profile
  (geography/demography/political system)
- development strategies of the past
  (critical assessment)

II. Major emphases in current development planning
- review of literature on future; different schools of thought
- overall goals
- related priorities
- planning implementation, and monitoring agencies

III. Development planning in selected sectors

A. Education :
- Present profile
- Future needs
- Prospective Agenda

B. Science and Technology :
Education and training; Research and Development in
- Social sciences
- Natural sciences
- Technology

C. Communication :
Present Profile

i) Infrastructure :
- Electricity
- Transportation
- Information Technology

ii) Mass Media :
- newspapers
- radio
- TV
- cinema

iii) Communication policy
- language policy
- cultural problems

D. Culture :
- cultural policy
- minorities and indigenous peoples : policies of their integration
- performing arts
- literature
- preservation of cultural heritage
- programmes of cultural exchange
- cultural identity

IV. Summary view of strategies for future:

Bibliography

(In addition to the four countries already working on the project -- Viet Nam, Laos, DPR of Korea, and Mongolia -- USSR also offered to participate and prepare a paper following the above chapter scheme.)

Other Suggestions

1. The participants welcomed the initiative taken by UNESCO in involving the scholars from the socialist countries in the work related to "World Problems and Future Oriented Studies" which form part of UNESCO's current Major Programme I.

2. It was indicated that the socialist countries are now opening up more and are greatly interested in participating in intellectual dialogues such as the present seminar. The participants requested UNESCO to take note of this growing interest and explore avenues to further it. In this regard, the participants felt the need to intensify regional cooperation among intellectuals both from socialist and non-socialist countries.

Concluding Session

The participants discussed the Draft of the Report and approved it with certain changes. They authorized RUSHSAP secretariat to prepare the final version of the Report incorporating the suggested changes and editing the text for style and presentation.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to the various chairmen and expression of appreciation for the assistance provided by the consultants. UNESCO was thanked for organizing this meeting and for its efficient running.

APPENDIX

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